GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEFENCE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:954
ANSWERED ON:20.08.2007
STRESS PROBLEM AND CHANGES IN RECRUITMENT RULES
Patil Smt. Rupatai Diliprao Nilangekar;Shukla Smt. Karuna

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to introduce any changes in the recruitment rules of defence personnel keeping in view the rising trends of stress among them;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government is contemplating to formulate any plan to reduce tension among the personnel; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ? ANSWE R

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY)

(a) to(d):A statement is attached.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS

(a) TO

(d) OF LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.954 FOR ANSWER ON 20.8.2007

Recruitment rules for selection of officers in the Defence Forces are already designed to identify candidates who are prone to stress. The officers` selection is based on personality assessment carried out at the Services Selection Boards which includes Group Testing, Psychological Test and Interview. Psychological Test, comprises of Situation Reaction Tests, Thematic Appreciation Tests, Word Association Tests and Self Description Test.

For recruitment of Personnel Below Officer Rank in the Army the Defence Institute of Psychological Research has been engaged to develop a system for psychological testing of the candidates.There is no such proposal in the Navy and the Air Force.

The Government is alive to the problem of stress among the troops and have taken several measures to prevent it. Some of the steps are:-

(i) Better man management and prompt attendance of grievances at Unit level.

(ii) Improved accessibility of leaders and frequent interaction of junior leaders with the soldiers.

(iii) Some Junior Commissioned Officers of Army Medical Corps (AMC) have been trained and deployed as psychological counsellors in Northern and Eastern Commands.

(iv) More JCOs and NCOs are being trained so that two counsellors are available in every unit.

(v) Training capsules on relaxation techniques including Yoga and Pranayam have been introduced.

(vi) Leave policy has been liberalised permitting splitting of annual and casual leave.The troops will now be able to go to their home towns on leave thrice a year instead of twice a year earlier.

(vii) Rotation of units and individuals to minimize exposure to stress.

(viii) All Chief Ministers have been requested to make the civil administration more responsive to the problems of serving soldiers and their families.

(ix) It has been decided to strengthen Rajya Sainik Boards and Zilla Sainik Boards in all States to take necessary follow up action on the grievances of soldiers in their home towns/villages.

(x) A helpline with toll free number has been established.

(xi) Efforts are made for identification and counselling of persons who are at higher combat stress by Regimental Medical Officers, junior leaders and unit commanders.

(xii) Grant of additional rail warrant to go home or Selected Place of Residence of family to all ranks of armed forces serving in field/counter insurgency/counter terrorist operational areas

(xiii) Rationalisation of scheme for LTC for both officers and Personnel Below Officer Rank (PBORs) allowing availing of home travel concession even for visit to Selected Place of Residence (SPR) of families in case of personnel posted in field areas and removal of restriction of 1450 kms for availing All India LTC.

(xiv) Grant of High Altitude (Uncongenial Climate) (HAUC) allowance at enhanced rates to troops deployed in more difficult, hazardous isolated areas within the existing HAUC areas.